

The partnership of the Republic of Moldova with the European Union and the benefits provided to the residents on both sides of the Nistru River



The Republic of Moldova and the European Union (EU) are developing and consolidating a very productive and ambitious cooperation, on a broad bilateral agenda, including along the lines of the Transnistrian settlement, especially since starting from 2005 the EU has been an observer in the "5+ negotiations" format.

The EU has always played a very important role in supporting the settlement process, and the messages of confirmation of strong support for the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial unity of the Republic of Moldova and the readiness to continue promoting confidence-building measures with tangible results for the inhabitants of both banks of the Nistru River are constantly reaffirmed in all dialogue platforms, including the 6th meeting of the Association Council of the Republic of Moldova-European Union on October 28, 2021.

The EU is fully involved by offering multiple programs of assistance, development, expertise and good practices that come to strengthen the efforts of the Republic of Moldova in achieving the Government's goal of reintegrating the country.

EU jointly with UNDP Moldova have funded hundreds of sustainable development projects involving actors on both banks of the Nistru River, which are designed to eliminate differences and increase human contacts, implementing 5 stages of the Program "Support to Confidence Building Measures "(CBM), with a total budget of 14.3 million. Euros and 26.208 million US dollars, in the period 2009-2023:

1. Phase I and II: 2009-2011, budget - 3.7 million. EUR;

2. Phase III: 2012-2014, budget - 10.6 million. EUR;
3. Phase IV: 2015-2018, budget - 11.104 million. USD;
4. Phase V: 2019-2023, budget - 15.104 million. USD.

Thanks to these projects, which involved beneficiaries from both banks of the Dniester in joint activities, pressing problems of the community were solved, the local socio-economic infrastructure was developed, partnerships between civil society and media organizations were deepened, innovative business initiatives were created, hundreds of new jobs were created, cultural heritage conservation projects were promoted, skills of professionals in various sectors and working conditions in the field of healthcare were improved, dialogue in thematic platforms aimed at eliminating disparities was stimulated.

The national authorities, hospitals and patients on both banks of the Nistru River as well as the Ukrainian refugees accommodated in the country have received considerable support from the EU and its Member States during the pandemic and the aftermath of the war in Ukraine. In this regard, the Republic of Moldova received many batches of humanitarian and financial aid, donations of modern equipment and medical items, doses of vaccine against COVID-19, some of which were also directed to the administrative units situated on the left bank of the Nistru River and the municipality of Bender.

The Republic of Moldova-EU Association Agreement and Agenda have a major impact on the process of increasing the attractiveness of the right bank for the left, the development of quality and efficient public services, harmonization of national policies with EU requirements and the prospect of restoring unified national spaces, co-optation of technical assistance and expertise from the EU institutions, obtaining new markets in EU Member States for economic agents from the Republic of Moldova, including from the Eastern districts of the country.

The liberalization of the visa regime with the EU, the harmonization of national and European Community legislation and the signing of Moldova's application for EU membership have substantially boosted the documentation of the inhabitants from the Transnistrian region with Moldovan documents. Currently, 341682 of them obtained

Moldovan citizenship, 316548 inhabitants hold passports of Moldovan citizens and 284664 citizens hold national identity cards.

The tools to facilitate trade with the EU offered by Brussels allowed to attract a larger number of economic agents from the region in the legal field of the Republic of Moldova, by March 31, 2022 the Public Services Agency registered 2268 entrepreneurs (from which 1776 with a provisional registration and 492 with a permanent one). At the same time, the EU has become the main destination for the annual exports of goods from the Eastern districts of the country, its share being more than half of the total regional exports over the last 7 years. In 2021, these transactions represented 54,32% of the region's exports. Similarly, the largest share of goods imported into the region originates from the EU Member States (39,04%).

It is also worth noting that starting with February 2016 the office of EU High Level Adviser for confidence building measures was established in order to strengthen the institutional capacity for the reintegration of the country and to synchronize the joint efforts of the EU and the Republic of Moldova in this regard. Its holder provides technical assistance and advice to the Deputy Prime Minister and the Bureau of reintegration policies. The office has been assigned to Ambassadors Josef Buzalka (February 2016-February 2018) and Kálmán Mizsei (August 2019-present).

We address our sincere gratitude to the EU for its permanent and firm involvement in supporting the settlement process, its dynamic contribution to creating the premises for the country's reintegration, the implementation of development and rapprochement projects of both banks of the Nistru River, the multifaceted support provided to the Republic of Moldova in managing different crisis situations and completing the structural reforms undertaken by the competent national authorities on the entire territory of the country.

